KATIVIK

PRESS RELEASE

Nunavik Youth Hockey Development Program now underway on an experimental basis

Kuujjuaq, Québec – October 20, 2006 – The Kativik regional Government (KRG) and Makivik Corporation were recently offered the opportunity to associate with Joé Juneau, former NHL Hockey player, Olympic Silver medalist and Aeronautical Engineer graduate in the development of an ice Hockey Program for Nunavik Youth which would promote the importance of Education and Crime Prevention within the population of young Inuit. The Kativik School Board also plays a significant role in supporting the program. The Ice Hockey Program will be developed on an experimental basis over a period of two years, until August 2008, by both the KRG's Recreation department and Joé Juneau.

After the adoption of a resolution during the last Regional Council meeting in September, the project began after its approval, despite the recreation department's very short period of time allotted to finding Local Hockey Trainers (LHT). Mr. Joé Juneau, Mr. Frankie Gordon Director of Recreation department KRG and Mr. Sammy Koneak Recreation Regional Advisor and the 8 selected hockey trainers from 6 of Nunavik's communities traveled to Kangiqsujuaq for the first hockey training camp on September 25th 2006. The Camp lasted 5 days, in which the Local Hockey Trainers and the youth between the ages of 7 and16 received training sessions.

Although the atmosphere of the hockey season was not in the air with no snow and the concept of training at the very beginning stages, all the players that were recruited through the school were there to participate; all were very attentive and ready to learn. The Local Hockey Trainers were enthusiastic, positive and after just couple of practices were confident in organizing the drills with the assistance of Mr. Joé Juneau.

"I was so impressed by how everything went during our first week in Kangiqsujuaq. The kids were all very happy to participate in this program and to learn some hockey skills. We also had many Local Hockey Trainers from a few different villages that helped us and learned a great deal about hockey at the same time. The people I've met during my time over there were all very kind to me. Over all, it was truly a real success!" Joé Juneau

The program's objectives are to assist the Northern villages in the implementation of a Local Hockey Program likely to help the development of young hockey players and to prevent criminality, to encourage young Inuit to pursue their education while practicing hockey, to train and qualify according to the criteria of the Québec Ice Hockey Federation one or two hockey trainers in each participating community, to develop the skills of young Inuit hockey players between the ages of 7 and 16 years old, to recommend advanced training (or try-outs in other leagues in the south) for certain skilled hockey players or sport-studies for certain skilled players having an excellent

school record, to encourage participants to improve their attendance and performance in school, to promote crime prevention within Nunavik, to promote the consumption of nutritional food products, to promote physical fitness, to initiate young people to community volunteer work and to develop a concept of Sports-Études adapted to Nunavik. This program will have no tolerance for the consumption of drugs and alcohol.

Over the next two years, there will be 25 sessions, in different pre-selected communities, for one week at a time. The sessions with Joé Juneau will be held from Monday to Friday, with the trainers in the morning, and with the kids in the afternoon. The morning sessions will be dedicated to going over the afternoon drills with the trainers. In the evenings, the sessions will be held on the ice with the kids, each divided into their specific age groups (7-9 years old, 10-12 years old, 13-14 years old, 15-16 years old).

Each of the participants will be expected to sign a contract with the community, engaging him/herself to follow the rules of the programs, improve his attendance and performance in school, do some volunteer work in his community, upkeep the hockey equipment that is made available to him/her, respect the other participants in the program whether they are players trainers or community leaders and behave as a responsible young person in his/her community.

Michael Gordon, the Vice Chairman of KRG is a strong promoter of the program. He states that "hockey is the sport of choice for Nunavik Inuit and there has been a need to have a program geared towards our Youth. The collaboration with Joé Juneau gives us the opportunity to have a program that, while promoting hockey also promotes crime prevention, success in school and healthy living.

The next training will be in Kuujjuaq from October 23rd to 27th 2006 and the identified 8 trainers plus 2 additional ones, since 2 communities did not have any candidates in the first session, will be welcomed.

Joe Juneau went to College and University where he received a degree in Aeronautical Engineering. After graduating he went to the Olympics, where he won a silver medal. Juneau was drafted 81st overall in the 1988 NHL entry draft by the Boston Bruins. In his first full season with Boston, Juneau finished with 32 goals, 70 assists and 102 points, setting a Bruin record for assists and points by a rookie. Juneau has also made stops in Washington, Buffalo, Ottawa, Phoenix and Montréal.

The Kativik Regional Government (KRG) is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, whose jurisdiction covers nearly the entire territory of Quebec north of the 55th parallel. The KRG administers the affairs of Nunavik in the areas of municipal affairs, transportation, environment, police, employment, manpower training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use management, civil security and economic development.

For More Information:

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